

U.S. Department of Justice
United States Attorney
Western District of New York

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PRESS RELEASE

May 27, 2005

RE: UNITED STATES v. ROBERT ALEKS

United States Attorney Michael A. Battle announced today the sentencing of Robert Aleks. Aleks, who was convicted of one count of making false declarations to a grand jury on February 10, 2005, was sentenced to one year probation, six months of home detention, and a \$1,000 fine by Chief United States District Judge Richard J. Arcara.

Assistant U.S. Attorney William J. Hochul, Jr., who handled the case, stated that Aleks had been convicted of making false declarations to a grand jury after Aleks lied to a federal grand jury that was conducting a criminal investigation of Laborers International Union of North America, Local 91 (hereinafter "Local 91"), which is based in Niagara Falls, New York. One of the allegations investigated by the grand jury involved the attempted extortion of Sansla, Inc. (hereinafter "Sansla"), which is a New Jersey-based, non-union company that performed asbestos abatement work at the Niagara Falls Drinking Water Treatment Plant (hereinafter "NFDWTP") in 1997. Among the allegations against Local 91 relating to Sansla, were that Local 91 members engaged in acts of intimidation and property destruction in an effort to drive Sansla and its employees off the NFDWTP project.

Aleks, a longtime member of Local 91, testified falsely before the grand jury that he was unaware of any Local 91 members engaging in acts of intimidation or property destruction at the NFDWTP project. Aleks later admitted that he lied to the grand jury and that, during the NFDWTP project, he, along with other members of Local 91, followed Sansla employees to their temporary residence in Niagara County in an effort to intimidate them and manipulated the locks on the front gate of the NFDWTP project to prevent Sansla employees from entering or exiting the work site.

Subsequently, the grand jury returned an indictment charging fourteen members of Local 91 with engaging in a violent scheme to extort union and non-union contractors, as well as union and non-union employees, at various construction projects in Niagara County, New York, between 1996 and May 2002. ¹

The conviction was the culmination of an investigation on the part of the United States Department of Labor, Office of Inspector General, under the direction of Special Agent-In-Charge John McGlynn, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, under the direction of Special-Agent-In-Charge Peter Ahearn, the New York State Police, under the direction of Major Michael Manning, the Niagara County Sheriff's Office, under the direction of Sheriff Thomas Beilein, and the Niagara Falls Police Department, under the direction of Superintendent of Police John R. Chella.

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¹ It should be noted that the fact that a defendant has been charged with a crime . . . is merely an accusation and the defendant is presumed innocent until and unless proven guilty. (**Disciplinary Rule 7-107(B)(6)**).

